

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

The invention provides expression vectors containing the promoter, enhancer and substantially complete 5'-untranslated region including the first intron of the major immediate early gene of human cytomegalovirus. Further vectors including the hCMV-MIE DNA linked directly to the coding sequence of a heterologous gene are described. Host cells transfected with the vectors and a process for producing heterologous polypeptides using the vectors and the use of the hCMV-MIE DNA for expression of a heterologous gene are also included within the invention.